

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph at page 11, line 23 as follows:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a first preferred ~~embodiment~~embodiment of the user authentication system of the invention.

Please amend the paragraph at page 12, line 8, as follows:

The SOAP proxy 22 is the module which realizes communication between the terminal 20 and the authentication server 10 by using the SOAP (simple object ~~access~~access protocol), and provides the client application 23 with the function of the authentication server 10 as a function interface transparent to the client application 23.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 19 as follows:

In the present ~~embodiment~~embodiment, since the password and fingerprint merge provider 16 are merge providers, the record corresponding to the password and fingerprint merge provider 16 is registered.

Please amend the paragraph at page 32, line 25 as follows:

Furthermore, in the present embodiment, the ticket is ~~categorized~~categorized into the primary ticket and the additional ticket according to the origin of issuing the ticket. The ticket with which ~~the ticket with which~~ the primary provider published the primary ticket is said, and, as for the additional ticket, the additional provider published.

Please amend the paragraph at page 35, line 2 as follows:

The additional ticket with which the additional provider publishes the list of additional tickets is recorded. However, at this time, since authentication by the additional provider is not performed yet, the list of additional tickets is ~~the~~ empty.

Please amend the paragraph at page 42, line 7 as follows:

In addition, after this step, it omits about the outer form about the ticket, and the ~~inner~~inner type distinction.

Please amend the paragraph at page 43, line 21 as follows:

The fingerprint feature data specified in the argument of the authentication function are ~~demanded~~demanded by the user who has demanded additional authentication.

Please amend the paragraph at page 48, line 1 as follows:

This shows that the additional provider who next makes additional authentication perform by client initiative is determined. That is, in the above ~~embodiment~~embodiment, although even the fingerprint authentication provider 18 explained the example by which the chisel is defined as an additional provider of the password and fingerprint merge provider 16, if the new authentication provider's information is added to the additional provider management table 193 and the authentication provider merge table 194, it is also possible to define two or more additional providers as the password and fingerprint merge provider 16.

Please amend the paragraph at page 51, line 2 as follows:

Progressing to step S106 following step S105, the password authentication provider 17 interprets the contents of the authentication primary ticket while checking the justification of the authentication primary ticket specified to be the argument by the term of validity, MIC, etc., and the authentication information data ("primary authentication information data") with which the contents of the primary ticket form are converted to the text form that the client 30 may ~~interpret~~interpret are created.

Please amend the paragraph at page 54, line 23 as follows:

Progressing to step S123 following step S122, the provider interface unit 13 calls the password and fingerprint merge provider 16 which is the ~~a source~~source of the authentication merge ticket.

Please amend the paragraph at page 57, line 19 as follows:

That is, the system which is available to the user is restricted with the range of validity contained in the ticket, the period for which the use is permitted to the user is

restricted with the term of validity contained in the ticket, and the justification of the ticket is guanteed with the code for ticket falsification check contained in the ticket.

Please amend the paragraph at page 60, line 4 as follows:

The various directory providers, such as the directory provider-A 14a, the directory provider-B 15a, the password directory provider 17a, and the fingerprint directory provider 18a, are the modules which provide the various attribute information of the superuser (such as the information about the affiliation or the executive, in addition to the information for accessing the users concerned, such as the extension number and the mail address), which will be called "user information".

Please amend the paragraph at page 60, line 18 as follows:

Moreover, the password and fingerprint merge directory provider 16a is the merge provider which makes the password directory provider 17a (primary provider) and the fingerprint directory provider 18a (additional provider) be associated. That is, among the directory providers, the concept of the merge, which is the same as that among the authentication providers in the first preferred embodiment, is applicable.

Please amend the paragraph at page 60, line 25 as follows:

The information of these directory providers and the merge information of these directory providers are managed by using the table in the format that is the same as that in the first preferred embodiment, which is stored in the merge information management DB19.

Please amend the paragraph at page 61, line 5 as follows:

In the second preferred embodiment, the fingerprint directory provider 18a is provided as the additional provider and the password directory provider 17a is as the primary provider, which are pre-defined in the merge information management DB 19.

Please amend the paragraph at page 61, line 11 as follows:

FIG. 19 is a sequence diagram for explaining processing of the authentication server in the present embodiment at the time of requesting the receiving of the user information.

Please amend the paragraph at page 61, line 19 as follows:

It should be noted that the processing in FIG. 19 is essentially different from the processing in FIG. 14 in which the user information about the user (the owner of the ticket) contained in the ticket is acquired when the client 30 requests the decoding of the ticket concerned to the authentication server 10.

Please amend the paragraph at page 63, line 18 as follows:

In addition, the password and fingerprint merge directory provider 16a makes the determination about the procedure for calling the password directory provider 17a with reference to the merge provider management table 192 and the authentication provider management table 191 and based on the definition that the password directory provider 17a is the primary provider.

Please amend the paragraph at page 64, line 15 as follows:

For example, when the retrieval to the additional provider is not needed (or when only the primary provider is the candidate for the retrieval) in the acquisition conditions, the password and fingerprint merge directory provider 16a outputs only the user list acquired from the primary provider (the password directory provider 17a) to the directory service interface unit 13a (S209).

Please amend the paragraph at page 69, line 8 as follows:

In addition, the platform 1040 is constituted with the pre-defined functions so that the application program interface (API) which receives the processing request from the applications 1030 is included.

Please amend the paragraph at page 75, line 1 as follows:

According to the composition shown in FIG. 26, the merge provider 1013 merges the user information and/or the group information to which the user belong, which are provided by the sub provider 1014 installed in the other devicedevice, and provides the merged information to the application 1030 of the multi-function peripheral system 1000.